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MAYOR JERRY SANDERS
PRESS RELEASE

SATELLITE TECHNOLOGY ENHANCES BALBOA PARK EXPERIENCE

First Phase of Trail System Upgrade Includes Better Descriptions of Routes and Level of Difficulty

Mayor Jerry Sanders and Councilmember Toni Atkins have unveiled the first phase of a high-tech makeover for the system of trails inside Balboa Park. The makeover unveiled by the Mayor and Councilmember used satellite images and Global Positioning System (GPS)-data to create better maps and descriptions of the popular trail system linking different areas of the park.

As part of the makeover process, new gateway signage will give park users a clear idea about the topography and degree of difficulty for trail routes they may choose. The first of the new signs has been installed at the intersection of Sixth Avenue and Upas Street on the park's West Mesa area near the Marston House Museum.

"The new maps and signage are going to help people better understand how different areas of the park are linked," said Mayor Sanders. "It's going to help us get people into areas of the park they may not have visited before," he said. "At 1200 acres, Balboa Park stands as the crown jewel of our park system," said Councilmember Atkins. "This project is going to enhance our visitor's experience and will make it easier for everyone to choose the kind of trail that works best for them," she said.

The high-tech makeover was initiated as part of the City's continuing effort to improve signage and access under the park's master plan. The Mayor and Councilmember were joined during today's unveiling ceremony by officials from the City's Park and Recreation Department and members of the San Diego Foundation the organization which provided the bulk of funding for the first phase of the new gateway signage effort.

The map and signage unveiled by the Mayor and Councilmember is the first part of a five phase gateways project that will interconnect routes with clearly marked color-coded and numbered signs.

More than 20 miles of trails are included in the descriptive signage and map unveiled today. Each of the gateway signs will inform users of distances, route directions and degrees of difficulty for trails in the park. Additional maps and signs will be constructed in phases at Morley Field, Golden Hill Park, the Presidents Way tram stop and Marston Point.

The first phase was funded in part by a generous grant from the Balboa Park Trust at the San Diego Foundation. The next phases of gateway projects are still in their planning stages. Mayor Jerry Sanders called the project “a remarkable example of what public/private partnerships and neighborhood support can do to keep our City vibrant, especially during these lean fiscal times.”

More information and trail maps are available at www.balboapark.org/trails.

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